

SCIENCE

The TAKS science test assesses how well students understand science, including physics, chemistry, and biology concepts, and how well they can apply and analyze scientific information. The knowledge and skills tested are grouped into five objectives.

Objective 1
The Nature of Science

Students must be able to show an understanding of experimental designs, safety issues, and methods for collecting and organizing data. Students must also be able to analyze scientific information from various sources.

Objective 2
The Organization of Living Systems

Students must be able to show an understanding of how living systems are organized, from the molecular level to cell structures to organisms to ecosystems.

Objective 3
The Interdependence of Organisms and the Environment

Students must be able to show an understanding of how all living things depend on their environment and other organisms for survival.

Objective 4
The Structures and Properties of Matter

Students must be able to show an understanding of basic chemistry (what matter is composed of and what happens as matter changes).

Objective 5
Motion, Forces, and Energy

Students must be able to show an understanding of basic physics (how motion, forces, and energy are related and how these relationships help explain many of the everyday phenomena people experience).

SOCIAL STUDIES

The TAKS social studies test assesses how well students understand important topics in U.S. history and world studies, which includes both world history and world geography. The knowledge and skills tested are grouped into five objectives.

Objective 1
Issues and Events in U.S. History

Students must be able to show an understanding of major issues and events in U.S. history, such as the fight for independence during the American Revolution and the role of the United States in World War I and World War II.

Objective 2
Geographic Influences on History

Students must be able to show an understanding of how geographic factors have influenced historical issues and events, such as the construction of the Panama Canal. Students must also be able to read maps, charts, and graphs.

Objective 3
Economic and Social Influences on History

Students must be able to show an understanding of economic and social influences on historical issues and events, such as the causes of the Great Depression and the impact of various reform movements on American society.

Objective 4
Political Influences on History

Students must be able to show an understanding of political influences on historical issues and events, such as the development of representative government in colonial America and the fundamental principles of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Objective 5
Critical-Thinking Skills

Students must be able to show the ability to use critical-thinking skills to analyze social studies information. Students must also know how to interpret written and visual sources of historical information.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The TAKS English language arts test is a combination reading and writing test. Students are required to answer multiple-choice and short answer questions based on two published reading selections and a visual representation, write a composition on a specific topic, and answer multiple-choice revising and editing questions based on passages that resemble student writing. Students are permitted to use both a dictionary and a thesaurus on the reading and composition sections of the test but not on the revising and editing section.

READING

Objective 1
Basic Understanding

Students must be able to show that they have a basic understanding of the reading selections included on the test. Figuring out the meaning of unknown words, finding important details and main ideas, and recognizing accurate summaries are all part of developing a basic understanding.

Objective 2
Literary Elements and Techniques

Students must be able to show that they understand the literary elements that are found in all stories. These elements include plot, conflict, character development, setting, and theme. Students must also understand how an author

combines these elements to create an effective story. In addition, students must be able to recognize the literary devices or tools an author uses to guide the reader's understanding of a story's characters, events, theme, and overall meaning. For example, students should know literary devices, such as flashback, foreshadowing, symbolism, and allusion.

Objective 3
Analysis and Critical Evaluation

Students must be able to show that they can develop a deep understanding of the reading selections and visual representation included on the test. They must be able to draw reasonable conclusions, use the text to support their conclusions, make meaningful connections between important ideas and themes, and understand the techniques an author has used to develop a text.

WRITING
Objectives 4 and 5
Written Composition

Objective 4 assesses the student's ability to write an effective composition on a specific topic. He or she must be able to stay focused on the topic, organize sentences and ideas so that they are clear and easy to follow, make the ideas interesting, and develop the ideas in detail.

Objective 5 assesses the student's ability to write as correctly and clearly as possible. This objective focuses on how well he or she communicates on paper. This means that when a student writes a composition, he or she is able to follow the rules of correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure.

A student's composition score represents his or her performance on Objectives 4 and 5. Scores range from 1 to 4. The meaning of each score is listed below.

- A score of 1 = an ineffective response
- A score of 2 = a somewhat effective response
- A score of 3 = a generally effective response
- A score of 4 = a highly effective response

If for some reason a student's composition could not be scored, he or she received a 0.

To pass the English language arts test, a student must score at least a 2 on the composition.

Objective 6
Revising and Editing

Objective 6 assesses the student's ability to both improve and correct passages created to resemble student writing. He or she must be able to improve the organization and development of ideas; improve the clarity and effectiveness of word choice; correct and improve sentences; and correct grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation errors.



Understanding the Confidential Student Report
A Guide for Parents

Exit Level Test

What is TAKS and how is it related to my child's high school graduation?

TAKS is the name of the testing program for students who entered high school before the 2011–2012 school year. These students must pass all parts of the exit level TAKS to receive a high school diploma from a Texas public school. The exit level TAKS includes four subject areas: English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

How did my child do on TAKS?

Every student who takes a TAKS test gets a report of his or her score. This report is called the Confidential Student Report, or CSR.

Your child received an overall score on each test, but you can get more information about your child's strengths and weaknesses by looking at his or her performance on each test objective.

Why am I receiving this brochure?

This brochure has three purposes:

- to give you some basic information about the TAKS program.
- to explain a sample test report so that you can understand your child's actual test report. This report applies to all exit level tests that your child took. However, the actual test report has your child's name on it and shows his or her test results.
- to provide you with a short summary of each objective on the subject-area tests so that you will know what knowledge and skills that objective tested.

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